



courtesy of Paramount Pictures

Tom Everett Scott (left) and Mark-Paul Gosselaar are roommates choosing their weapons in "Dead Man on Campus."

## 'Dead Man' serves up mindless, quirky fun

By Justin M. Lubin  
Contributing A&E Writer

The joint venture of Paramount Pictures and MTV Productions brings us our newest Odd Couple, *Dead Man on Campus*. But it may not be so dead after all.

*Dead Man on Campus* stars Tom Everett Scott (*That Thing You Do!*) as Josh, the serious freshman at Daleman University and Mark-Paul Gosselaar (*Saved By the Bell*) as Cooper, a bong-ripping, beer-chugging freshman.

It doesn't take long for Josh's new roommate, Cooper, to derail his mind off the books, and into the finer activities of college life, women, drinking, partying and flunking.

With the semester nearing an end, Josh and Cooper face the possibility of failing out of school; a possibility both cannot afford. In an effort to obtain the almighty degree, they stumble upon a loophole the Daleman College has in its by-laws, a law that states if your roommate dies of his own willful act (suicide) you receive a 4.0 GPA.

Josh and Cooper set out to find somebody to fulfill their plan, and they find three unsuspecting victims, Cliff (Lochlyn Munro), the campus nut, Buckley (Randy Pearlstein), a paranoid conspiracy theorist, and Matt (Corey Page), the seemingly troubled British musician.

Gale Anne Hurd (*T2* and *Aliens*) produced *Dead Man on Campus*. On board are novice screenwriters Mike White and Michael Traeger, and MTV veteran and first time feature film director Alan Cohn.

*Dead Man on Campus'* running time of 96 minutes is about the length of a good professor's lecture. For single-minded students looking for an enjoyable, mindless flick, the fact that there weren't many subplots made the movie that much more enjoyable.

Cohn's direction takes the serious subject of suicide and creates humor with no disrespect to the subject itself. Meanwhile, Scott and Gosselaar's characters play off each other with the simple wit and charm that made Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau one of the most famous pairs in Hollywood.

Scott's acting career began in a low budget independent McDonald's commercial. Since

then, the Syracuse University grad, and native of East Bridgewater, Mass., has starred in such films as the Tom Hanks movie *That Thing You Do!* and *American Werewolf in Paris*.

Such theater companies as the Wooster Group and Steppenwolf inspired Scott. He and several friends formed a TheaterCo., which focused on mostly original work, nothing mainstream. He has directed plays and would one day like to direct features.

When he chooses a role, he follows five basic themes: Material, character, cast, director and producer. Thus far, he has mostly gravitated toward comedies. "Comedy is the most rewarding because, if they laugh, you did it!" he said.

Getting up early for college was not one of his favorite things to do, but for shooting this movie it meant early morning shoots and long hours. Like his character (Josh), he went into college taking really hard classes and not knowing why. He soon realized nobody would be upset if he took *Basket Weaving* instead of *Chemistry*. So, Tom signed up.

Shooting the movie was a flashback for him, but he couldn't share his memories with co-stars Mark-Paul and Poppy Montgomery since they never went to college.

"I don't think they've missed anything, especially since nobody's asked to see my degree yet," he said.

He admits there were a lot of firsts at college, going from a small town to a big school. He was open for all kinds of change. "Sex and drugs equals massive change equals no more uptight," he said.

The "Dead Man's Clause" was heard around the halls of SU and in Scott's dorm room. He thought about it for about half a second, then met his roommate, a male cheerleader, who just loved being in school.

As for his next projects, look for him in *One True Thing*, with Meryl Streep and Renee Zellweger and in the Indie flick *Top of the Food Chain*.

After interviewing Scott, this reporter found him funny, easy-going and generous with his thoughts. The future seems quite bright for this actor.

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